

Appl. No. 09/706,294

Prel. Amdt. dated April 9, 2003

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

sub DI Claim 1 (currently amended): A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said the waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said the absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis ~~which defines an exterior surface, an interior surface opposite said exterior surface,~~ that includes a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges;

C1 b) a pair of opposed side panels ~~which that extend outward from and between said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region and said the back waist region of said absorbent article to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings in said pant-like disposable absorbent article,~~ wherein each of said the opposed side panels defines a first side margin, said the first side margins are permanently attached to said the side edges of said the absorbent chassis in one of said ~~front waist region and said the back waist region of said absorbent article~~ to provide a permanent joint, and a second side margin, said the second side margins are releasably attached to said the side edges of said the absorbent chassis in ~~an opposite the front~~ waist region of said absorbent article to provide a releasable joint; and

c) a fastener permanently attached to each of said the second side margins margin of said each of the side panels, wherein said fastener defines a fastener edge length in said longitudinal direction and said releasable joint defines a releasable joint length in said longitudinal direction, wherein said ~~releasable joint length is greater than said fastener edge length~~ the releasable joint is provided by the fastener and one or more releasable bonds.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said the absorbent chassis comprises:

- a) an outer cover;
- b) a bodyside liner which is connected to said the outer cover in a superposed relation; and
- c) an absorbent core disposed between said the outer cover and said the bodyside liner.

Claim 3 (canceled)

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Claim 4 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ the fasteners are hook and loop type fasteners.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim ~~3~~ 1 and further comprising at least one attachment panel which is located on ~~said~~ an exterior surface of ~~said~~ the absorbent chassis wherein ~~said~~ the fasteners are refastenably engaged to ~~said~~ the attachment panel.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim ~~3~~ 1 wherein ~~said~~ the absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides ~~said~~ an exterior surface of ~~said~~ the absorbent chassis and wherein ~~said~~ the fasteners are refastenably engaged directly to ~~said~~ the outer cover of ~~said~~ the absorbent chassis.

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Claim 7 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ the side panels are extensible at least in ~~said~~ the lateral direction.

Claims 8-9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 and further defining an article centerline in ~~said~~ the longitudinal direction wherein each of ~~said~~ the fasteners includes a fastener ear that is attached to ~~said~~ the second side margin of ~~said~~ the side panel and extends inwardly toward ~~said~~ the article centerline when in a prefastened configuration.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 10 wherein ~~said~~ the fastener ears are extensible at least in ~~said~~ the lateral direction.

Claim 12 (canceled)

Claim 13 (currently amended): The ~~absorbent~~ one or more article of claim ~~12~~ 1 wherein ~~said~~ the one or more releasable bonds are ultrasonic bonds.

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Claim 14 (currently amended): A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said the waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said the absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis ~~which defines an exterior surface, an interior surface opposite said exterior surface, that includes~~ a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges;

b) a pair of opposed back panels which are permanently attached to said the side edges of said the absorbent chassis in said the back waist region of said the absorbent article;

c) a pair of opposed front panels which are releasably attached to said the side edges of said the absorbent chassis in said the front waist region of said the absorbent article to provide a pair of releasable joints wherein said the front panel and said the back panel on each side edge of said the absorbent chassis are connected together along a side seam to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings and provide said pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article; and

d) a fastener permanently attached to each of said the front panels adjacent said the releasable joint and configured to refastenably engage said an exterior surface of said the absorbent chassis in said the front waist region, wherein said fastener defines a fastener edge length in said longitudinal direction and said releasable joint defines a releasable joint length in said longitudinal direction, wherein said releasable joint length is greater than said fastener edge length each releasable joint is provided by the fastener and one or more releasable bonds.

Claim 15 (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 14 wherein said the absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides said the exterior surface of said the absorbent chassis and wherein said the fasteners are configured to refastenably engage directly with said the outer cover of said the absorbent chassis.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 14 wherein said the side panels are extensible in at least said the lateral direction.

Claims 17-18 (canceled)

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Claim 19 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 14 and further defining an article centerline in said the longitudinal direction wherein each of said the fasteners includes a fastener ear that is attached to said the second side margin of said the side panel and extends inwardly toward said the article centerline ~~when in a prefastened configuration.~~

Claim 20 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 19 wherein each of said the fastener ears are extensible in at least said the lateral direction.

Claim 21 (canceled)

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Claim 22 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim ~~24~~ 14 wherein said the one or more releasable bonds are ultrasonic bonds.

Claim 23 (currently amended): A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said the waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said the absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis ~~which defines an exterior surface, an interior surface opposite said exterior surface, that includes~~ a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges; and

b) a pair of opposed back panels which are permanently attached to said the side edges of said the absorbent chassis in said the back waist region of said ~~absorbent article~~;

c) a pair of opposed front panels which are permanently attached to said the side edges of said the absorbent chassis in said the front waist region of said ~~absorbent article~~ wherein said the front panel and said the back panel are releasably connected together along a side seam to provide a releasable joint and ~~to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings and provide said absorbent article~~; and

d) a fastener permanently attached to each of said the back panels adjacent said the side seams and configured to refastenably engage one of said the front panels and upon disengagement of said the releasable joints, said the fasteners are also configured to ~~refastenable~~ refastenably engage said an exterior surface of said the absorbent chassis in said the front waist region, wherein said ~~fasteners~~

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~~define a fastener edge length in said longitudinal direction and said releasable joints define a releasable joint length in said longitudinal direction, wherein said releasable joint length is greater than said fastener edge length the releasable joint is provided by the fastener and one or more releasable bonds.~~

Claim 24 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 23 wherein ~~said~~ the absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides ~~said~~ the exterior surface of ~~said~~ the absorbent chassis and wherein ~~said~~ the fasteners are configured to refastenably engage directly with ~~said~~ the outer cover of ~~said~~ the absorbent chassis.

Claim 25 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 23 wherein ~~said~~ the side panels are extensible in at least ~~said~~ the lateral direction.

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Claims 26-27 (canceled)

Claim 28 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 23 and further defining an article centerline in ~~said~~ the longitudinal direction wherein each of ~~said~~ the fasteners includes a fastener ear that is attached to ~~said~~ the second side margin of ~~said~~ the side panel and extends inwardly toward ~~said~~ the article centerline ~~when in a prefastened configuration.~~

Claim 29 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 28 wherein ~~said~~ the fastener ear is extensible in at least ~~said~~ the lateral direction.

Claim 30 (canceled)

Claim 31 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim ~~30~~ 23 wherein ~~said~~ the one or more releasable bonds are ultrasonic bonds.